

Resolution in Support of Medicaid Expansion in Alabama

Whereas, Medicaid is the nation's health insurance program for low-income individuals and families, and

Whereas, the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling on healthcare reform makes Medicaid expansion optional for states, leaving each state's decision in the hands of the governors and state leaders, and

Whereas, the federal government will pay 100% of the cost of expanding coverage through 2016; after that, the match goes down by 2% each year, but Alabama will never pay more than 10%, and

Whereas, while Alabamians are paying, and will continue to pay, federal taxes to cover the cost of Medicaid expansion, so Alabama is not only losing billions of dollars, but our tax dollars are being used to pay for expansion in other states, and

Whereas, three out of five uninsured Alabamians ages 19-64 who would qualify for coverage under an expanded Medicaid program are hard-working adults in low-wage, economically essential jobs that do not offer health coverage, and

Whereas, the top industries in Alabama employing the largest number of uninsured Alabamians are restaurants and other food services, construction, landscaping services and household goods repair, and

Whereas, this expansion does not add benefits, but merely allows adults making less than \$15,000 a year the opportunity to receive health coverage that will increase access to preventative care, avoid costly emergency room visits, and create a more productive workforce, and

Whereas, the Affordable Care Act reduced funding to hospitals intended to cover the cost of the uninsured; these reductions were made based on the belief that states would expand Medicaid and lower the number of uninsured; and

Whereas, Alabama's hospitals will experience these mandated cuts regardless of whether the state expands health coverage, cuts that will place a tremendous financial strain on hospitals resulting in elimination of services, loss of jobs and even hospital closures thus reducing access to care for every Alabamian, and

Whereas, the healthcare industry is one of the state's largest employers, providing salaries and benefits to more than 80,000 individuals, and indirectly supporting more than 79,000 additional jobs, and

Whereas, in addition to the health benefits, Alabama would experience a tremendous economic boom from the estimated \$12 billion in funding, which will create an overall economic impact of \$28 billion in six years, creating \$10 billion in wages and over 30,000 new jobs in health care, retail, construction, food service, and more, and

Whereas, a strong healthcare delivery system is essential in supporting economic development and sustaining and recruiting business to Alabama,

Therefore, be it resolved, we the _____ endorse Medicaid expansion recognizing it is essential to the state's economy, to preserve access to care for every Alabamian and to ensure a healthy workforce, and we strongly call on our state's leaders to take advantage of this opportunity and find an Alabama-driven solution to increase health coverage .